

NICOLA CUTI • JOE STATON • CHUCK BORDELL



#1  
OF ONE  
\$275  
3.75 CAN  
ONE SHOT  
SPECIAL

# EMAN RETURNS



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## ISLAND OF THE DAMNED

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UP ON THE ROOFTOPS

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IT'S ALMOST TO THE SURFACE, JARR. IF I'M **RIGHT**, THEY'LL SOON BE JABBERING AWAY ABOUT THE **DISCOVERY** OF THE **CENTURY**.

FOR YOUR SAKE, **BURDEN**, IT HAD BETTER BE A **RICH** **DISCOVERY** AND NOT JUST SOME NEW SPECIES OF **PUFFER FISH**.



YOU'RE A **PUFFER FISH**, **BURDEN**, ALL PUFFED UP WITH **PROMISES** THAT MAKE YOU LOOK LIKE A **BIG** MAN. THE **COMPANY** THOUGHT YOU WERE A "BIG" MAN, BUT NOW THEY SEE THAT YOU'RE MOSTLY **HOT AIR**.

IF THE GUYS IN THE **CAN** DON'T BRING BACK A **MONEY-MAKING** FIND, THE **COMPANY'S** GOING TO WANT ME TO LET ALL THE **AIR** OUT OF YOU.

HERE'S THE **SUB**. NOW YOU'LL SEE.



SORRY, DR. **BURDEN**, BUT THERE'S **NOTHING** THERE.

DR. **BURDEN**!



THERE ARE TWO SWIMMERS STRANDED ON A **REEF**. I THINK ONE OF THEM IS **HURT**!

THERE THEY ARE! WHAT WOULD **PEOPLE** BE DOING THIS **FAR-R-R-R...**



OH, MY **LORD**!

GRRRRR!



DR. AMOS BURDEN, OF THE HAVEN OCEANIC INSTITUTE RETURNED TO PORT THAT NIGHT AND REPORTED NO UNUSUAL INCIDENT.

HOWEVER, A SECTION OF THE HAVEN AQUARIUM WAS SEALED OFF AND PATROLLED BY ARMED GUARDS WHO ANSWERED TO A MAN CALLED MASON JARR.

TWO DAYS LATER, A SECOND, SEEMINGLY UN-RELATED EVENT OCCURRED AT THE SAME LOCATION...

DAD, I CAN'T GET THE MOTOR STARTED. IT'S FLOODED!

GO HELP YOUR BROTHER SECURE THE MATCHES. WE'LL JUST HAVE TO RIDE OUT THIS DAMNED STORM!



DAD! YOU'RE HEADING TOWARDS A REEF! STEER AWAY STARBOARD!

I CAN'T HEAR YOU, TOMMY. SAY IT AGAIN!



KRASH!



AAHHHHEEE!



THE UNMERCIFUL STORM CHURNED THE WATER AND HAMMERED TALL WAVES DOWN ON THE LUCKLESS FISHERMEN, POUNDING THE BREATH FROM THEIR CHESTS. BELOW WAS PEACE.

BELOW WAS SANCTUARY FROM THEIR PAINFUL STRUGGLE. BELOW WAS DEATH.

AND WHEN THEY COULD RESIST THE WAVES NO LONGER...



LOOK! A SHIP!

THANK GOD! WE'RE SAVED!



THE CRAFT CAME SAILING SILENTLY THROUGH THE ROILING SEAS WITH HARDLY A PITCH OF ITS STUBBY BODY. IT WAS A GHOST SHIP, PATROLLING THE HAUNTED WATERS LIKE THE LEGENDARY FLYING DUTCHMAN...

WHAT A WEIRD LOOKING SHIP!

YOU'RE RIGHT, TOMMY -- LET'S WAIT FOR THE QUEEN MARY!



YOU FELLAS SAVED OUR LIVES! WE COULDN'T HAVE LASTED ANOTHER MINUTE IN THE WATER! THANKS!



KA-BOOM!



"...AND WHEN THE MEANEST ONE OF THE THUGS STRUCK ME ON THE NOGGIN WITH A PIN, I SAW POLARIS AND ALL HIS BUDDIES..."



HE HIT YOU ON THE HEAD WITH A PIN AND YOU FOLDED?

IT WAS A BIG WOODEN BELAYING PIN, MAUSER. GEEZ, DON'T YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT BOATS?





E-MAN'S  
NOT ON BOARD  
THE BOAT, HE  
IS THE  
BOAT!

EVERY  
BRIDGE, DECK  
AND CROSSJACK  
--EVERYTHING  
BUT THE  
BARNACLES.

MAYBE  
YOU'D BE MORE  
COMFORTABLE IF I  
ADOPTED A MORE FAMI-  
LIAR FORM? BLOW  
ME DOWN, YA  
SWABS!

SORRY, DIDN'T MEAN  
TO BE INSENSITIVE, SO,  
JUST **NOW** SERIOUS IS  
YOUR PROBLEM?

HE YAM  
WHAT HE AIN'T.  
STOP CLOWNING  
AROUND, HONEY.  
MR. HENKE HAS  
A **SERIOUS**  
PROBLEM.

MY  
SONS  
HAVE  
BEEN  
KID-  
NAPPED.

SOON, SOMEWHERE OVER  
THE GREAT ATLANTIC...

TERNS? ARE YOU  
SURE A TERN IS THE  
**BEST** SHAPE FOR  
THIS JOB?

GEE, NOVA,  
**LAST** TIME, YOU CHOSE  
OUR SHAPES, SO NOW IT'S  
MY **TERN**. IF YOU DON'T  
LIKE IT, YOU CAN TAKE  
A **U-TERN**!

ENOUGH!  
ENOUGH!

IF YOU'RE  
THROUGH WITH THOSE  
**NORRIBLE** PUNS, TAKE  
A GLANCE BELOW AT  
TWO O'CLOCK. IS THAT  
THE BOAT HENKE  
DESCRIBED?

IT  
**CER-TERNLY**  
LOOKS LIKE IT!  
LET'S DROP  
DOWN FOR A  
**CLOSER**  
INSPECTION.



THIS HAS GOT TO BE THE ONE. LET'S FOLLOW IT.

THAT MAKES SENSE. IT MUST HAVE A HOME PORT SOMEWHERE.



AND THERE IT IS. I'LL BET THAT ISLAND ISN'T ON ANY CHARTS!

I'M GETTING HUNGRY, HONEY. WHAT DO TERNS EAT?

TERN-UPS.



WHAT DO YOU THINK, NOVA? SHOULD WE HANG AROUND AND CHECK OUT THEIR CARGO?

I'M FOR GIVING THAT VILLAGE PAST THE HARBOR A CAREFUL GOING-OVER. WE STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON.

GOTCHA!



BINGO! THAT'S GOT TO BE THE HENKE BOYS!

I STILL WANT TO LOOK AROUND MORE BEFORE WE MAKE OUR MOVE. ONCE WE HIT THE ACTION TRAIL WE WON'T BE ABLE TO COME BACK AND SEE WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT.







UH-OH!  
HERE COMES  
THE SECOND  
WAVE!



IT'S NOT NICE  
TO BEAT UP  
ON A GIRL!



I SURE  
HOPE WE'RE GOING  
SOMEWHERE, BE-  
CAUSE THOSE SHARKS  
WILL BE ALL OVER  
US IN A WINK!



HURRY!  
GET  
ABOARD!

YOU  
SPEAK  
ENGLISH?

OF COURSE!  
BUT WHY ARE  
YOU SUR-  
PRISED?



YOU'RE NOT  
ONE OF US!

I SUPPOSE  
THERE ISN'T MUCH  
NEED FOR THE  
DISGUISE ANY  
MORE.

E-MAN AND  
NOVA! WE KNOW  
WHO YOU ARE! WE'VE  
BEEN OBSERVING THE  
HUMANS FOR A LONG,  
LONG TIME!

"...A LONG, LONG TIME,"  
HUH? HOW LONG IS THAT?  
HUNDREDS, THOUSANDS, MILLIONS  
OF YEARS? I CAN'T BELIEVE  
YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO KEEP  
OUT OF HUMANITY'S WAY FOR...  
WHAT? AN EON?

THE  
ISLAND IS  
NEW, NOVA.  
WE ARE  
NOT.

AS THEY APPROACHED THE DOLPHINS' CITY, THE TWO SUPER-HEROES WERE SURPRISED BY THE DECORATIVE ARCHITECTURE. THOUGHT AND STYLE HAD CARVED THE PLEASING FORMS--A SHARP CONTRAST FROM THE HAPHAZARD SHARK BUILDINGS, WHICH SEEMED MORE LIKE A MADMAN'S NIGHTMARE.

THIS IS A SURPRISE, E-MAN AND NOVA. WE KNEW WE WOULD BE MAKING HUMAN CONTACT SOMEDAY-- BUT NOT THIS SOON.

THIS IS ARA-EL, THE GOVERNOR OF DOLPH NATION, OUR HALF OF THE ISLAND.

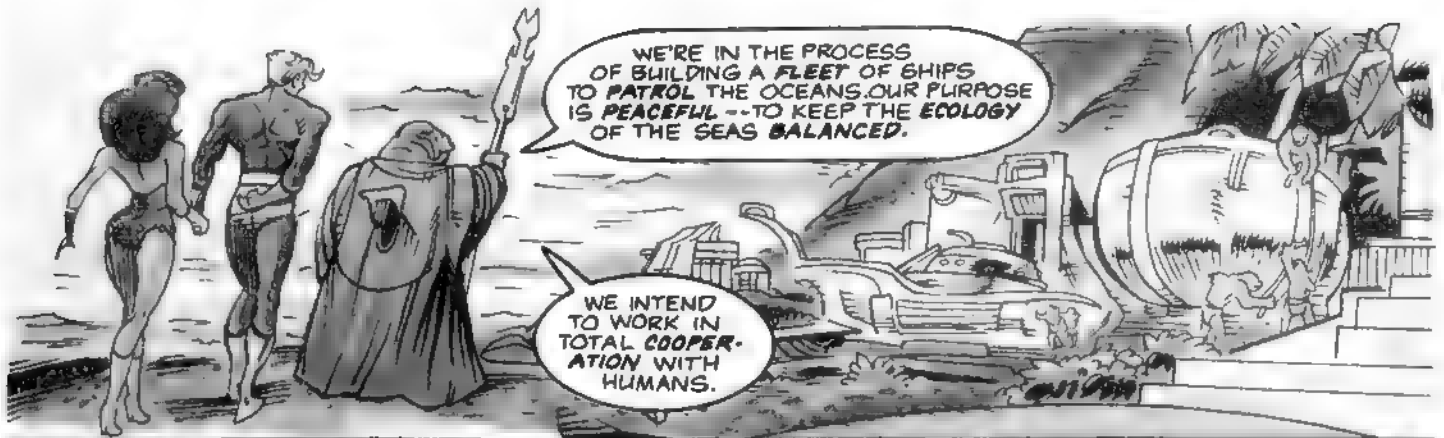
I KNOW OUR ARRIVAL IS UNEXPECTED, BUT I HOPE YOU WON'T CONSIDER US INTRUDERS.

NOT AT ALL. YOU ARE WELCOME GUESTS. ALLOW ME TO SHOW YOU AROUND.

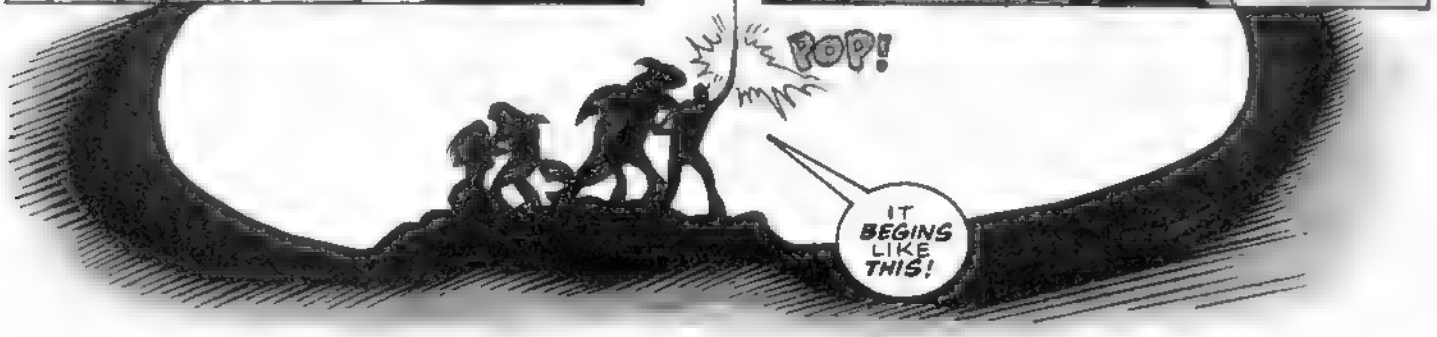
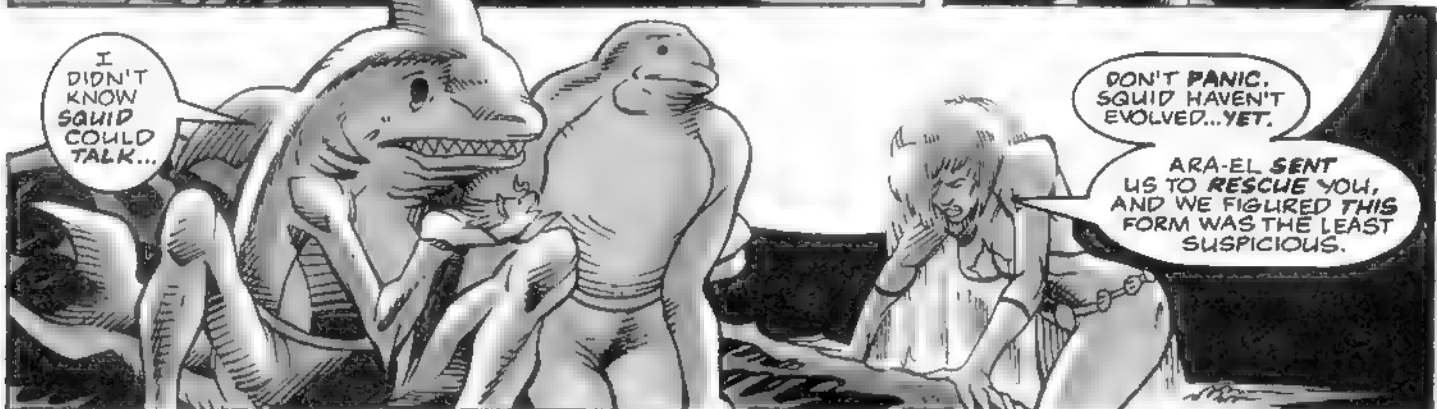
AS YOU CAN SEE, WHEN WE RESCUE HUMANS FROM THE RAVAGES OF AN ANGRY SEA, WE INVITE THEM TO STAY ON OUR ISLAND AND LEARN OUR WAYS. NO ONE IS HELD PRISONER.

I DIDN'T NOTICE ANY HUMANS WITH THE SHARKS.

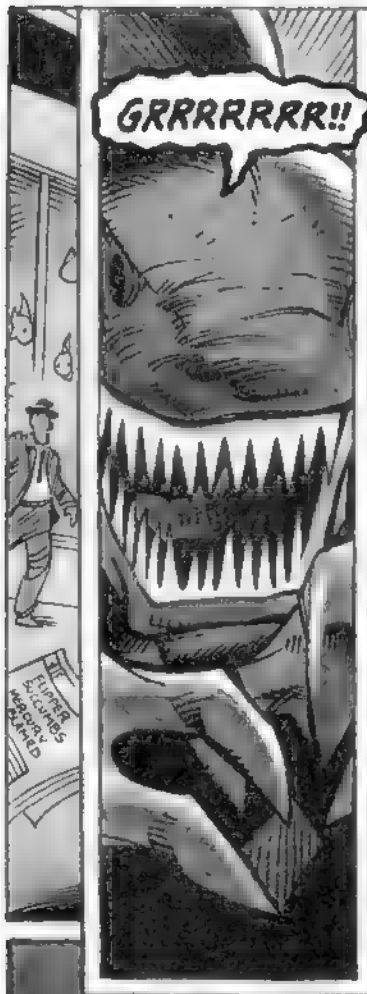
SHARKS DON'T TAKE IN HUMANS... ALIVE.













DR. BURDEN, THE **FISHPEOPLE** HAVE **ESCAPED**, AND JARR NEEDS YOU TO HELP **RECAPTURE** THEM. HE WANTS YOU TO **MEET** HIM IN FRONT OF THE **BARRACUDA EXHIBIT**.

WE CAN USE THAT NEW **GAS...**

STAY WHERE YOU ARE.



THIS IS **NONE** OF OUR **BUSI-**  
**NESS**. IT'S A **COMPANY** MATTER.



CAN I GET THE **BIG FISH'S** AUTOGRAPH, MOMMY?

WHEN HE TAKES OFF HIS HEAD, HONEYROT.

SPEC EXH BILLY, DID WE GET NOTICE OF A **MOVIE SHOOT?**

FISH GIFTS

THEY NEVER TELL THE FRONT OFFICE ANYTHING. I'LL **TAPE** A FEW MINUTES ANYWAY.



**NO!** YOU CAN'T DO THAT! THE ACTORS ARE... UH, **PUBLICITY SHY!**

YEAH, SURE...AND **GUNS AND ROSES** PLAYS **POLKA**. WHAT'S GOING ON HERE -- **E-MAN!**



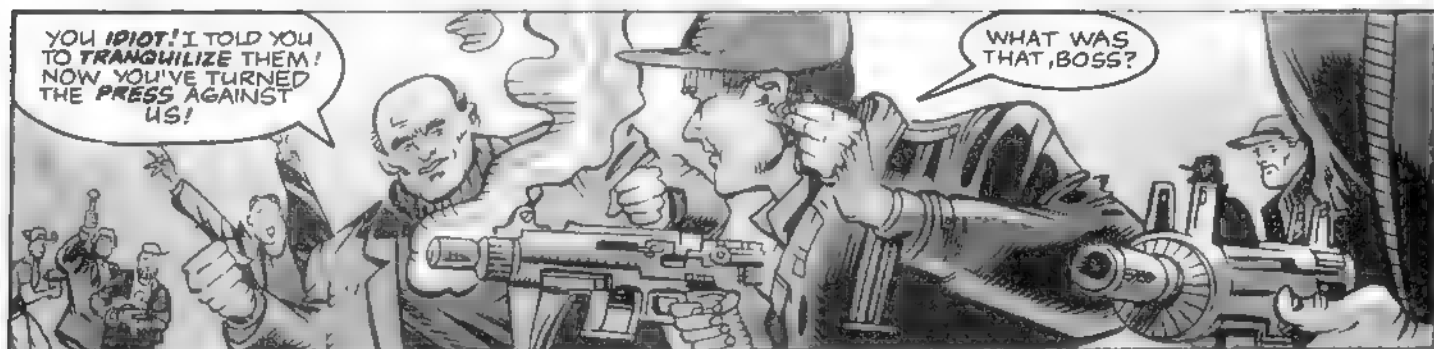
OH, HI **TED**.

AMIGO, MY DEAR, DEAR FRIEND, TURN THE OTHER WAY ON THIS, AND I PROMISE YOU AN **EXCLUSIVE** WHEN IT'S OVER.

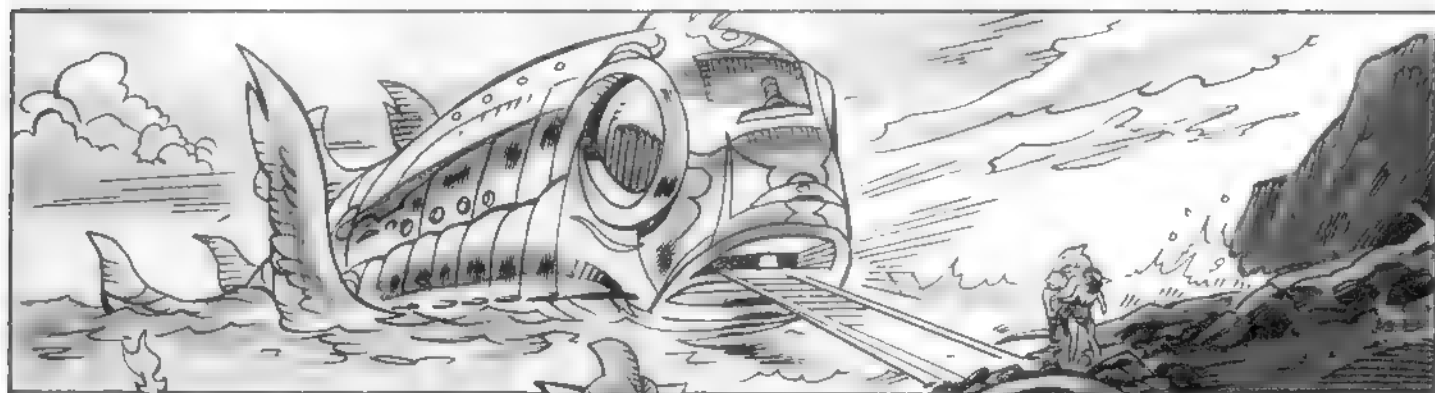
SORRY, **FAL O'MINE** BUT THIS IS **HOT NEWS** AND **HOT NEWS COOLS QUICKLY**



WHAT THE ..!



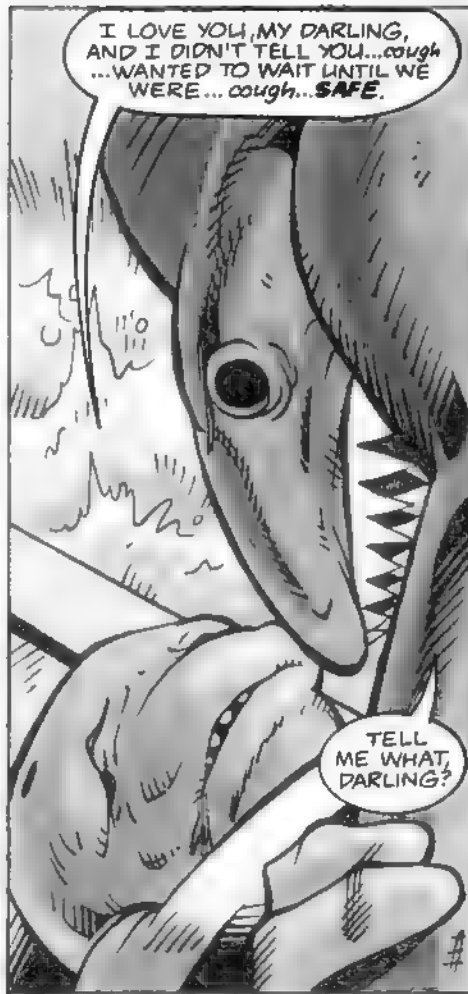






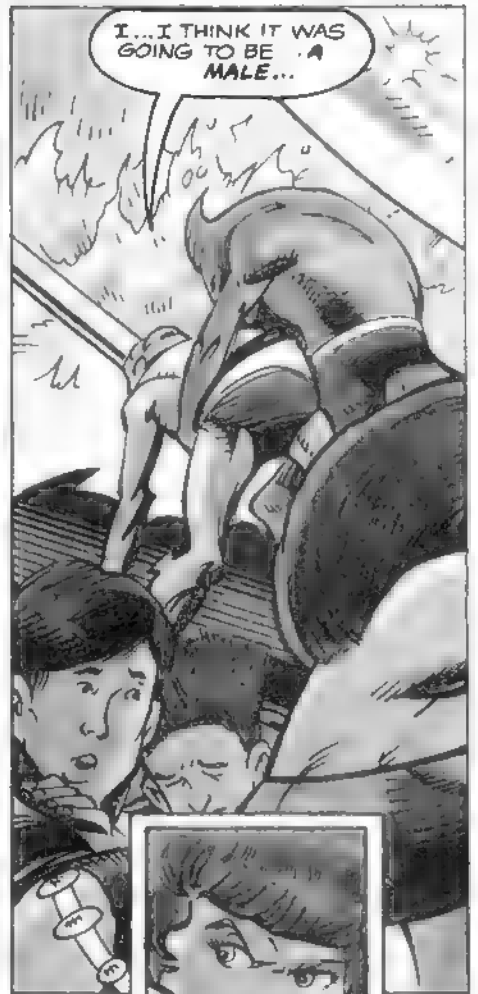
COUGH, YOU MUST PROMISE ME NOT TO ...COUGH... NO REVENGE!

I SWEAR NO REVENGE.



I LOVE YOU, MY DARLING, AND I DIDN'T TELL YOU...COUGH... WANTED TO WAIT UNTIL WE WERE... COUGH...SAFE.

TELL ME WHAT, DARLING?



I... I THINK IT WAS GOING TO BE A MALE...



EAT DIRT AND DIE! YOU MURDERING...!



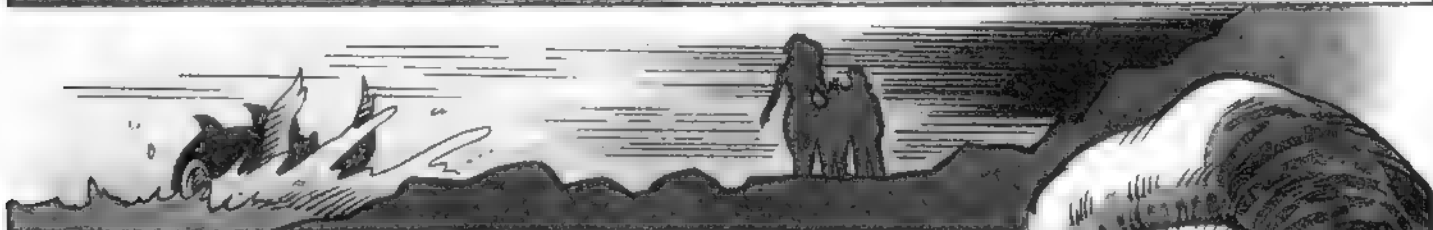
YOU ASKED FOR A DANGEROUS SUPERHERO, BOSS. AND YOU GOT ONE!

SHUT UP!



MS  
KANE, WAS  
IT **WORTH**  
IT -- HER  
**DYING** FOR  
US?

**DEATH** NEVER  
HAS A TRUE **PURPOSE**  
TO IT. ONLY THE **LIVING** CAN  
CHANGE THINGS FOR THE  
**BETTER**. IT WILL BE UP  
TO **YOU** TO GIVE HER  
DEATH **VALUE**.



MAUSER'S HERE  
WITH CAPTAIN DOYLE.  
THEY'VE ROUNDED UP  
JARR AND HIS MEN.

I SAW  
WHAT HAPPENED.  
I'M SORRY I  
COULDN'T GET HERE  
SOONER. MAYBE I  
COULD HAVE **PRE-**  
**VENTED**...WELL,  
I'M SORRY.

WHAT'S GOING  
TO **BECOME** OF  
THEM, HONEY, NOW  
THAT THEIR **SECRET**  
IS OUT?

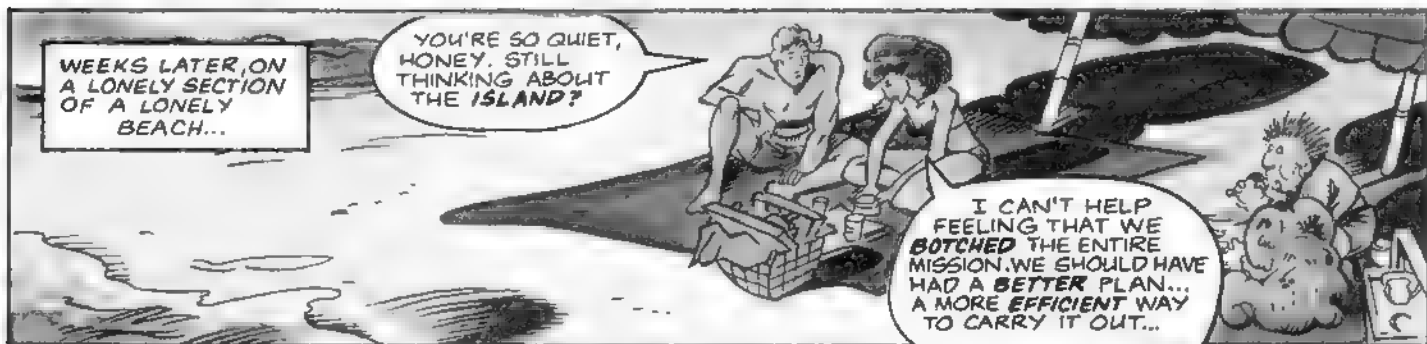


DO  
YOU **HEAR**  
SOMETHING?

**THE ISLAND!**  
**THE VOLCANO IS**  
**ERUPTING!**



AS THE SLEEPING GIANT AWOKE  
AND SPEWED OUT ITS RIVERS OF  
FIRE, THE WITNESSES ON SHORE  
STOOD SILENT, CERTAIN THAT THEY  
WERE OBSERVING GENOCIDE. WHEN  
IT WAS OVER, THEY LEFT, AND  
NO WORD PASSED BETWEEN  
THEM FOR HOURS.



WEEKS LATER, ON  
A LONELY SECTION  
OF A LONELY  
BEACH...

YOU'RE SO QUIET,  
HONEY. STILL  
THINKING ABOUT  
THE ISLAND?

I CAN'T HELP  
FEELING THAT WE  
**BOTCHED** THE ENTIRE  
MISSION. WE SHOULD HAVE  
HAD A **BETTER** PLAN...  
A MORE **EFFICIENT** WAY  
TO CARRY IT OUT...



DON'T FORGET THAT  
WE WERE FIGHTING  
OFF THE EFFECTS OF  
**DRUGS**... BESIDES, EVEN  
IF WE HAD MANAGED TO  
SAVE MARA, SHE WOULD  
PROBABLY HAVE **PERISHED**  
WITH THE REST OF THEM  
IN THE **VOLCANIC**  
ERUPTION.

ARA-EL!



I'M GLAD COUR INSISTED  
THAT WE RETURN AND  
**FIND** YOU. WE COULDN'T  
ALLOW THE TWO OF YOU  
TO BELIEVE THAT WE  
HAD ALL BEEN DES-  
TROYED IN THE  
ERUPTION.



YOU **IGNITED**  
THE VOLCANO,  
DIDN'T YOU?

WE HAD **EXPLOSIVES** READY  
FOR THE DAY WHEN WE  
MIGHT HAVE TO **ERASE** ALL  
TRACES OF OUR  
**EXISTENCE**.



YOU'VE  
BROUGHT OUR PEOPLES  
TOGETHER AND GIVEN US  
ALL HOPE. WE'RE GOING TO  
FIND **ANOTHER** ISLAND, AND  
WHEN WE DO, WE'RE GOING  
TO CALL IT **MARA-NOVA**  
ISLAND.

THANK  
YOU.



DO  
YOU FEEL  
**BETTER**  
DARLING?

MUCH.

End



MR. JIGSAW - MAN OF A THOUSAND PARTS

© 1993  
RON FORTIER  
&  
GARY KATO  
edited by  
CHRIS MILLS

in  
**UP ON THE ROOFTOPS**

**A** WARM SUMMER NIGHT IN PORTLAND, MAINE. A COOL BREEZE FROM THE OCEAN MAKES FOR A NEAR PERFECT EVENING.

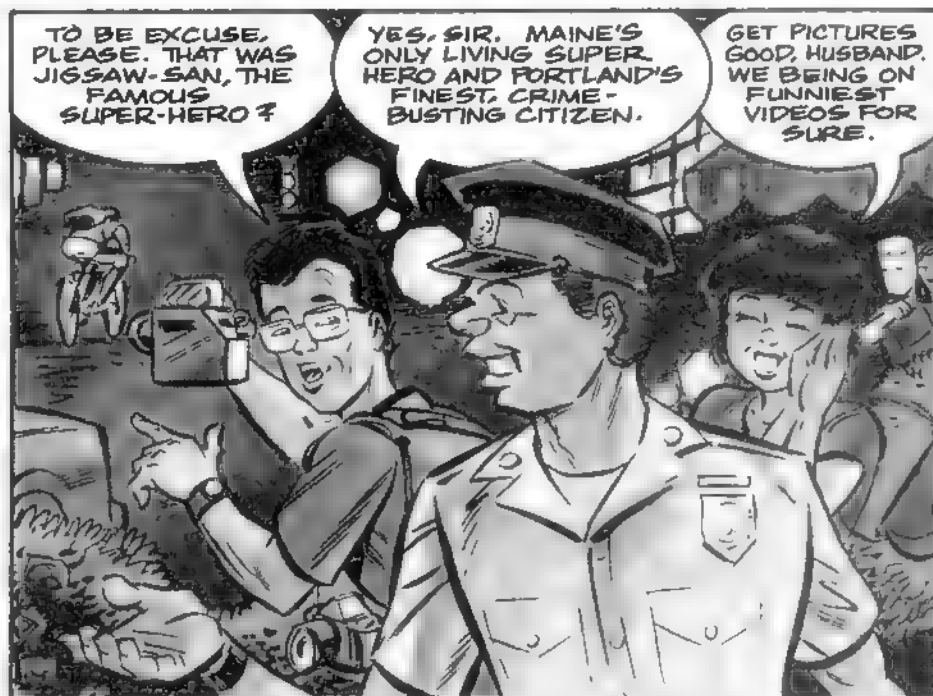
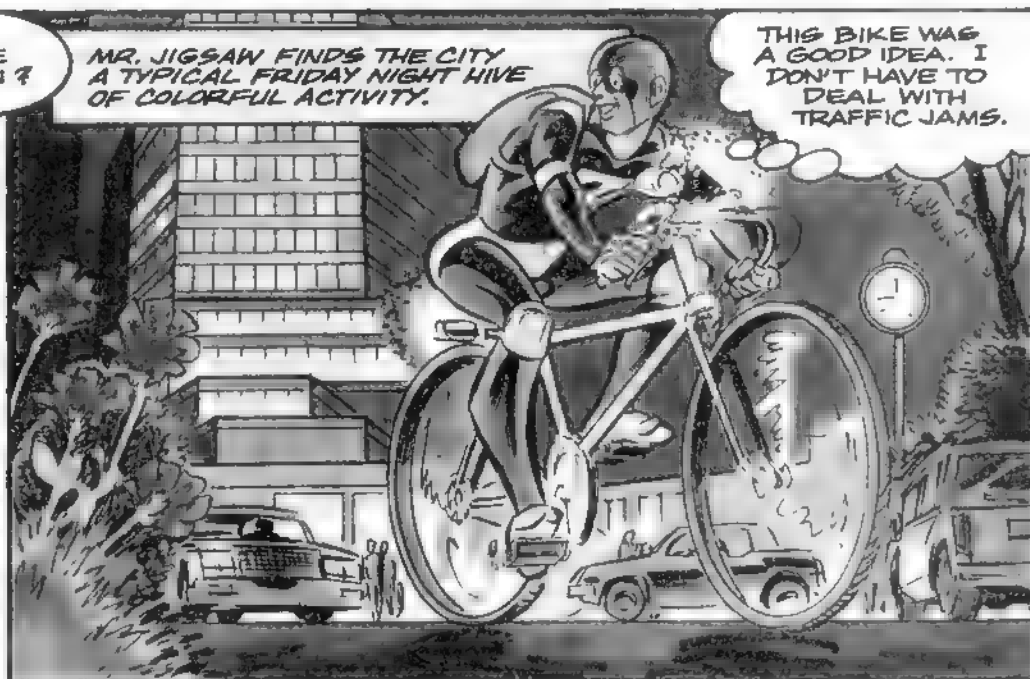
IT IS A MOMENTOUS NIGHT FOR CHARLIE GRANT, ALIAS MR. JIGSAW, MAN OF A THOUSAND PARTS.

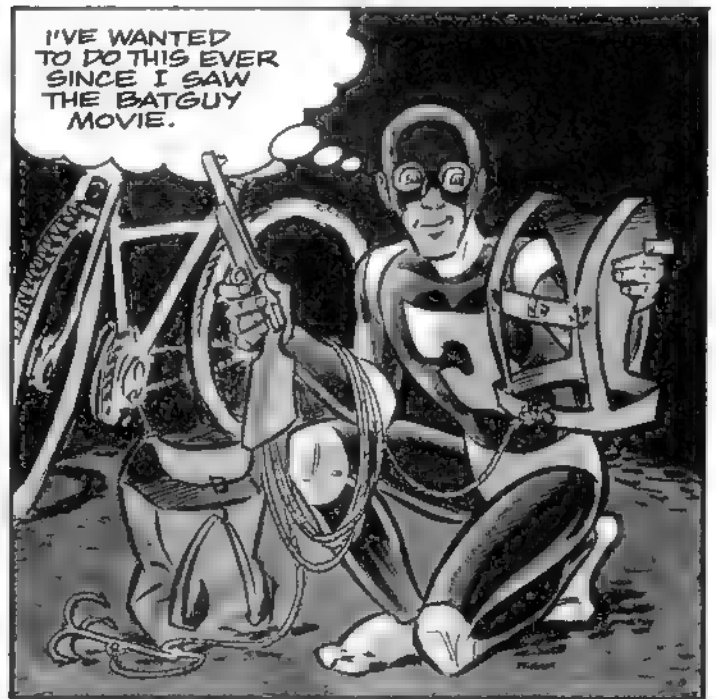
I CAN'T WAIT TO GET DOWNTOWN AND TRY OUT THIS NEW GRAPPLING LINE.

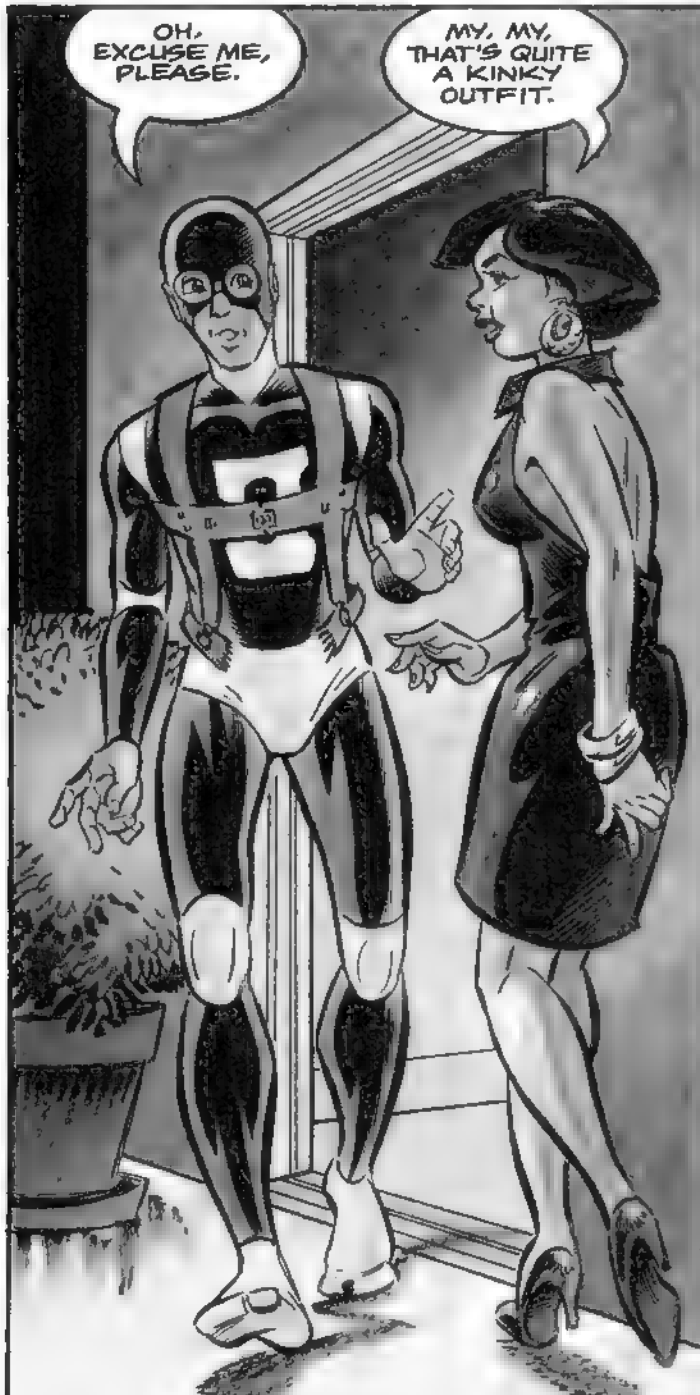
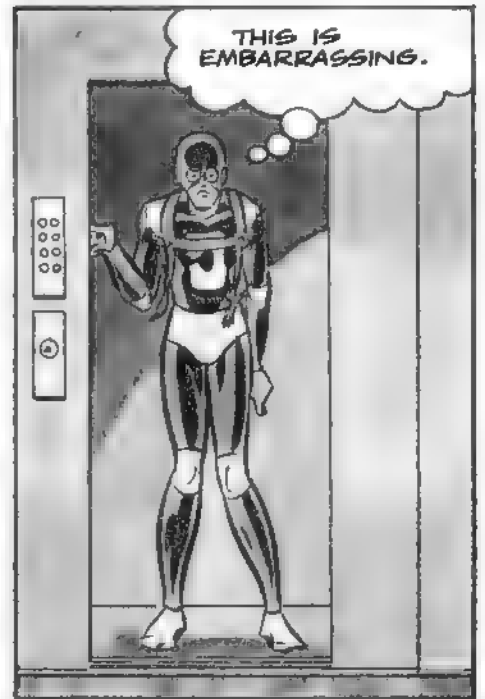
PSST, DAN. THERE GOES CHARLIE IN HIS MR. JIGSAW SUIT AGAIN.

PAULA. GET OUT OF THE WINDOW!

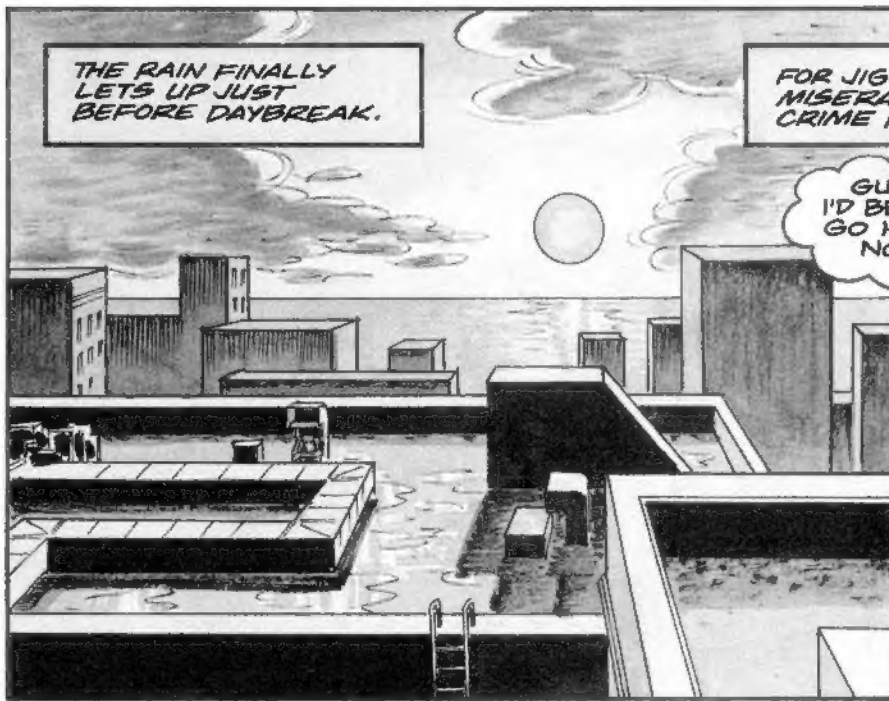












THE RAIN FINALLY LETS UP JUST BEFORE DAYBREAK.



FOR JIGGY, IT WAS PERHAPS THE MOST MISERABLE NIGHT OF HIS ENTIRE CRIME FIGHTING CAREER.

GUESS I'D BETTER GO HOME NOW.



THE ONLY THING HE CAUGHT WAS A COLD.

ACHOO!



MY BIKE! IT'S GONE. I DON'T BELIEVE THIS. SOMEBODY STOLE MY BIKE.



THIS NEVER HAPPENED TO BATGUY!

ACHOO!

THE END

# THE ALPHA STATE

Well, it's that time again, time to sit down before the keyboard and hype or bitch. In the last few months it seems I've done a lot of whining about the comics industry, and, sad to say, it doesn't look like it's getting much better.

Different, sure.

But better?

I dunno.

In the last few weeks, we've been getting a number of calls from concerned freelancers and friends, all wondering if Alpha was still in business. It seems that rumors are flying about the deaths of a number of middle-and-low level publishers across the country, and Alpha, whose market share is so small that Capital City's *Internal Correspondence* magazine doesn't even bother to list it, is considered a "high risk" for such a fate.

Retailers are reeling from the financial blow dealt to them last Summer and Fall, when big, corporate-backed comic book companies promised considerably more than they delivered. Over-committed dealers either cut their orders across the board or went out of business entirely. Especially the dealers who jumped ship from sportscards and quickly drove comics into the ground with their mindless speculations and ill-considered investments.

Obviously Alpha's still around. You're reading this, right? Now, I'm not going to deny that things are rough - anybody who thinks I'm making a great living doing this is welcome to take a gander at my pay stubs - but we're still here, still fighting.

Or maybe we just ain't smart enough to quit.

Now this is the part where I beg you to give us a hand - you know, you've heard it before - make sure you ask your dealer to order our books, buy a copy for a friend, pass the word.... and etcetera.

You're getting tired of hearing it, and hey, it ain't a helluva lot of fun to say. But if we're going to survive, and keep publishing alternatives to the high-gloss, slick, soulless "product" being churned out by the big corporate

giants, we need your help... and your input.

That's right. Your input. Your ideas, your opinions, your words.

Write to us. Tell us what you liked and what you didn't. Which titles you'd like to see us continue, which ones you thought sucked.

Go ahead, slam us - we're tough, we can take it. We're still here, ain't we? And, if that ain't tough, nothing is.

Okay, enough whining. It's time to hype.

If you're reading this column in **E-MAN RETURNS™** go back to your comic book shop immediately, and pick up a copy of **LETHARGIC COMICS™** #3... and if you can find 'em, pick up Number 1 and number 2, too. **E-MAN™** artist Joe (Exo-Squad, Batman, Guy Gardner, Green Lantern) Station contributed a Walrus Boy story to #1 and drew the incredible cover for #2.

*Hero Illustrated* and *The Comics Buyer's Guide* have been singing the praises of **LETHARGIC COMICS™** for months now. Why not pick up a copy and find out why?

And if you're reading this in **LETHARGIC**, you obviously like FUN comics, so why not run out and pick up a copy of the **E-MAN RETURNS™** Special? Aside from a wonderful story, and great art, you get a fantastic **MR. JIGSAW** story by Ron (Green Hornet) Fortier and Gary (ElfQuest: New Blood) Kato!

Pretty cool, huh?

Hang around, pal, we've got a lot more cool stuff coming at you every single month!

Tell your friends - let's not be the best kept secret in comics any more!

## NEXT MONTH:



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